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II. *The first week ; Confinement Period.*

846 733 853 From the day of birth till the moment when the umbilical cord falls, seven days may elapse : this forms a special period called *busahana*, which is the period of confinement for both mother and child. It will be concluded by the special ceremony of the child's first outing, marked by the rite of the broken pot. During these seven or eight days, *the mother* is restricted to a special diet, and this is a true "marginal period" for her. She is absolutely outside the pale of society. The diet is prescribed by the family doctor, who knows how to treat children, and consists of a special dish prepared with Kafir corn (1) (mabele) and called *shimhimbi*, with which special medicines have been mixed. The aim of this medication (khwebela busahana) is twofold : first to expel the unclean blood which follows the birth, and which is a very great taboo, and secondly to stimulate the production of the milk. This food is cooked in a special pot (shikhwebelo sha busahana) and is eaten not with the hands, as some particles of the unclean blood might enter it and cause the mother to become phthisic, but with a special spoon.

846 Both the pot and the spoon will be fastened over the entrance of the hut, inside (shirangen sha nyangwa), at the end of this period of seclusion.

A fowl is also killed during these first days, a hen if the child is a girl, a cock if it is a boy. Some medicinal powder is poured into the broth, and the mother drinks it and eats part of the meat, the husband eating the remainder. This little luxury is indulged in as it helps the mother to recover her strength sooner ; she is attended to by her own mother, who has been summoned as soon as the birth has been satisfactorily effected, and who helps her to feed the child.

262 (1) This use of Kafir corn in this and other old rites proves the antiquity of this cereal. It is probably the first which was known to the Natives. Maize is quite a modern food amongst the Thongas, though the time of its introduction is not known. See Part IV.

846 751 825 278 856 them till they burn. The smoke then rises, and he exposes the child to it for a long time : the body, face, nose and mouth. The baby begins to cry ; he sneezes, he coughs ; this is just what is wanted. Then the doctor takes what remains of the pieces of skin, grinds them, makes a powder, mixes it with *tihuhlu* (1) grease of the year before last and consequently hard enough to make an ointment. With this ointment he rubs the whole body of the child, especially the joints, which he extends gently in order to assist the baby's growth.

846 751 853 All this fumigation and manipulation is intended to act as a preventive. Having been thus exposed to all external dangers, dangers which are represented by the beasts of the bush, the child may go out of the hut. He is now able "to cross the foot prints of wild beasts" (tjemakanya mitila) without harm. Snakes will not bite him, at any rate their bite will not hurt him ; lions will not kill him. The remainder of the powder is put into a little bit of reed closed at both ends, which the mother has to carry with her during the whole nursing period in order to continue the treatment.

846 755 763 821 This rite of the broken pot is also the great preventive remedy against the much dreaded ailment of babies, *convulsions*. If a child suffers from this, they will say : "a tlalile shirengelen," viz. "he did not find any help in the broken pot" and the parents will go to another doctor whose drugs are more powerful, to have the child once more exposed to the smoke. It may even be that a grown-up man will undergo this treatment again, if he has been ill with convulsions, but, in this case, the broken pot with its pieces of skin is put on the head of the patient, which has been first covered with a wisp of cuscuta (hare dja yendjeyendje). The great aim of all the medication of children by the "milombyana" is also to fight against convulsions, as we shall see (2).

(1) The tihuhlu are the seeds of the mhuhlu tree known under the name of mafureira. They are oleaginous and the fat (mafura) obtained from them is very much used for external applications amongst the Thongas.

(2) In *Savage Childhood* p. 12, Dudley Kidd describes this "baptism of smoke" amongst Zulus. Some dirt is scraped from the father's body and is mixed with other drugs in order to impart to the child his ancestral spirit. Another ingredient

842 The Thonga child is always received into this world with great joy by the whole family. If it is a girl, it means oxen to buy a wife for one of the sons later on ; therefore it means increase not only in the wealth but in the number of the members of the family. If it is a boy, there is no direct material enrichment, but the clan has been strengthened and the name of the father is glorified and perpetuated. In the case of the birth of a first-born child (nwana wa matibula), a special ceremony is performed at the end of the first week. When the grandmother has smeared the hut, she goes home, summons all the female relatives, sometimes as many as ten or fifteen ; they take with them food, ochre and fat prepared for this purpose. Two or three men accompany them. They enter the village of the child executing a special dance called *khana*, and singing the following song (which is the proper song to glorify a first-born) :

846 533 851 603

I celebrate my pot which has done *ngelebendje*...

They compare the child with a pot of clay which has gone through the firing process. It has been tried as one always tries a pot by letting it fall to the ground ; but it is not shattered, because it has not cracked in the furnace, it has kept intact ! This is what is meant by the descriptive adverb ngelebendje.

846 851 603 Then they smear the baby, the mother, the father, everybody in the village with ochre. It is a great feast. A goat will be killed, if possible, because the father and mother have "found a village" (kuma muti) by the child, they have "grown roots" (mila mitju). This is a law, but its omission is not taboo. When the grandparents do not perform this ceremony, it is an insult to the parents of the child, but no evil consequence will follow.

755 753 851 is a meteorite ground to fine powder. It is interesting to compare this use of the meteorite with the fact that, amongst the Thongas, this fumigation is intended to prevent convulsions. Convulsions, as we shall see (Part VI. Chap. II. B) are caused by the mysterious power of Heaven. The meteorite has fallen from Heaven. Thus the baptism of smoke aims at bringing the child under the influence of the two main elements of Bantu religion : the ancestor gods and Heaven.

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853 824 *neta* as a medecine. The shrub, which is an Euphorbiacea, contains milky sap. It is a treatment based on the principle : Similia similibus curantur.

751 278 763 854 The Thongas believe that milk alone would never suffice to make a child grow : *Ñwana a kula hi miri, the child grows by medicine*, such is the adage which is universally met with. When you see a woman carrying a child on her back, you will notice hanging to the *ntéhe* the reed (lihlanga) containing the black powder which protects against the dangers of the bush, and a little calabash half filled with water. This water is not pure water, it is the medicine called *milombyana*. This word is the plural and diminutive form of *nombo*, which means baby's ailment. There is a great *nombo*, convulsions, also called *tilo*, heaven, because this complaint is brought into a mysterious connection with the influence of Heaven (See Part VI). There is a small *nombo* ; this is the infantile diarrhea which so often troubles little children ; but both diseases are supposed to be caused by the *nyoka*, the intestinal parasite, the worm or snake (nyoka means both) which is in every child and must always be combated because, if unchecked, it will pass from the bowels to the stomach ; it will come and beat the fontanella (1) and will finally penetrate the chest. Then the little one will turn up his eyes, be seized by convulsions and die. Happily there are some drugs which have a wonderful effect on this dangerous guest ! One of my neighbours, who was a convert in Rikatla, gave me their names. The first is a very common Protacea (?) with large husks called the Dlanyoka, "the one which kills worms." Mixed with the roots of a Leguminacea called *Ñwamahlanga* and with two other plants found near the sea, it forces the worm to keep quiet. These drugs are boiled and the decoction is carefully poured into a special little pot called *hlembetwana ya milombyana* which will be kept in the hut. Every morning the mother will warm the pot a little, pour some of its contents into a shell of sala and give the child a

[278] 751 757 854

757 826 (1) Tjaba-tjaba, the fontanella, plays a great part in the diagnosis of children's doctors and they often cover it with black wax. When the child hiccoughs, his mother or somebody else will blow on the fontanella to prevent vomiting. This will "make his heart stand" (yimisa mbilu).

862 603 The very day of his weaning, the child must leave the village of his parents and go to stay with his grandparents. A little mat and a few clothes have been prepared for him and the grandmother comes to take him. If he is the first-born, he must go to the parents of the mother ; the second child will be received by the parents of the father. Sometimes father and mother accompany their offspring themselves, during the night, to make the separation easier. It is a sad day for them as well as for the child! The following day the parents go again to see how the little one has stood their absence. They do not enter the village. They remain hidden in the little copse and look at their child through the branches! He must not see his mother, otherwise he would cry... A touching scene indeed!

862 Should the weaned child be obliged to stay with his parents, the mother will smear her breast with Jamaica pepper (biribiri) so that he may lose his taste for the maternal milk as quickly as possible.

862 842 753 The act of weaning is called *lumula*. It comes from the verb *luma* to bite, followed by the reversive suffix *ula* which means to take away, to undo (like *un* in undo). The mother as well as the child are said to have *lumuka* viz. to be in that state when weaning has been accomplished. This word is pronounced with a curious smile, because the act of weaning is in direct relation with the sexual life. As we have seen, sexual intercourse is absolutely prohibited before the tying of the cotton string, viz. for one year after the birth. Afterwards it is allowed, but the mother must not conceive another child before she has weaned the one she is nursing. The law is even more stringent : she must not conceive before her milk has entirely passed away (phya mabelen), after the weaning ceremony, because if she became pregnant, that would "cross the way of the weaned child" (tjemakanya ñwana), cut "his road" (tjemela), "go beforehand" (rangela) ; he would become thin, paralysed, with big holes below the shoulders. He must first be [illegible](tiyela), then a new pregnancy will not be able to cause him to suffer from dysentery or other ailments!

Often the parents do not observe this very hard law! If they

to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

* * *

But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions: when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification: 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these « stagiones » in vol. — Analyst]

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
783 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during
829 the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Malulcke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they
829 were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
789 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
771 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces ; these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

we shall discuss in Part VI the
843 origin of this extraordinary idea. A woman who has had a
834 miscarriage is impure for three months at least. Menstruation
841 must have taken place two or three times and have cleansed her before her husband can have any sexual relation with her. (Compare Annotatio 7,[4] which applies to the transgression of this rule.)

7) Parturition.

846 We have described, when treating of birth, the many taboos
733 which accompany parturition. The *busahana* period, from the moment of delivery till the fall of the umbilical cord, is very much dreaded. When a woman is suffering from *shilumi* (a disease which sometimes follows delivery, probably owing to a displacement of the organs) she must not enter the hut of a woman who has been confined. The ailment would "jump over to her" (tlulela). There is however a way of preventing contagion. The visitor must take the piece of clothing which she uses as a girdle and throw it to the patient, and the patient throws back her own girdle to the visitor. Then she can enter : "They have acted according to the law, there is no more *yila*."

846 A mother must not drink any milk from the birth of the child
851 until its presentation to the moon. Afterwards she is allowed to drink only milk from cows which have calved many times.

The rite of *kunga* is performed in the case of a first-born child. This child is called *nwana wa matibula*, the child by which the woman has *tibula*, viz. has become a mother. The etymology of this word *tibula* (Zulu zibula) is not known. When people come to greet the baby, its parents will not allow them to take it in their arms. They must pay something for permission to do so, even a brother, a sister, or a grandmother. The father is not subject to this rule ; "the child is his, belongs to him." Nowadays this ceremony means only that these people are happy to receive the new born child amongst them. There is no taboo in it. But it is certainly related to the fact that in giving birth to a child for the first time, the woman has passed from womanhood to motherhood.

I [See p. 617 in these categories or in 116- Analysis]

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837 684 692 The woman is questioned, and confesses when, where, and how many times he has sinned with her. If he denies this, the object taken from the hut is exhibited. The adulterer is condemned by the chief to pay a *whole lobolo*, £ 15 to £ 20, as much as is necessary to buy a wife. He is rebuked before the whole assembly. "If you had taken a girl, it would not have mattered at all. Why did you abduct a married woman ? Do you not know that it breeds endless trouble at court (tindaba) ?"

The counsellor of the deceived husband goes to the counsellor of the lover to claim the money. The latter must go to the guilty man. The parents of the adulterer insult their son : "You see! All this money lost now! If only you had lobola a wife with it!" They must help him to find it at once, because this is a law universally recognised : the price of adultery must be forthcoming. (Nandju wa bumbuye a wu pfumali). The poor man will have to pay ; he will even have to add a hoe to "drive away" (hlongola) the counsellor, who keeps it for his reward!

837 684 783 763 608 Why is adultery so strongly prohibited and punished ? Not at all from any moral consideration of purity or chastity, but for two other reasons. First a social one. Adultery with a married woman is a theft, because she is owned by a master. She is not punished herself, except when the watcher finds her out and gives himself the pleasure of thrashing her to his heart's content. The whole punishment falls on the man ; he is the thief. But there is also a physical reason for it : the *matlulana*! We have already met with this word. *Tlulana* means to jump over each other, to compete with each other. In the sexual domain it is said of two men who have relations with the same woman. "They have met [826] together in one life through the blood of that woman ; they have drunk from the same pool" (Viguet). This establishes between them a most curious mutual dependence : should one of them be ill, the other must not visit him ; the patient might die. If he runs a thorn into his foot, the other must not help him to extract it ; it is tabéo ; the wound would not heal. If he dies, his rival must not be present at his mourning or he would himself die (See page 137). Should he even be the actual son (sometimes it happens that a son commits adultery with one of the younger wives

of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamination; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action) remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part II). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

(1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga *gwahabana*, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

244 being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art, in which it provides the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower, which enters the ground, and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared
[754] as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When there are no nuts inside the shells, which often happens, Thongas call the empty shells *maboobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane." But this is a euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

244 824 *b)* Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.), the *Kafir pea*. This also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or three times as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men
[753] are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, only women can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through the plot. It might be supposed that this taboo was of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it would not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this:

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilatana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *tanga* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

244 pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in
753 it without the old man's knowledge ; then people will venture to
824 plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

222 There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives
824 collect and of which they make excellent dishes : the *tjeke*, a
828 kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness ; the *nkakana*, a pretty plant of the Cucurbitaceae family, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

137 *Tomatoes* (shimati) are also found growing round the villages,
285 where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for : the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I am unable to say when they were introduced. There is a agreeable kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

244 Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European varieties, which they very much appreciate in their sauces.

249 *The sugar cane* (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

245 The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date ; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

249 *Tobacco* (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first

themselves, the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla lad came to see me with an eye-glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic." I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his tightly-curled hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, so that it formed a sort of frame to his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome, but we do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume suited to their colour, their customs, their occupations, and their climate! But they want to be like us, so what is to be done ? (1) Their idea of costume is evidently different from ours : they consider it as an adornment rather than as an actual protection against cold or heat. If it rains, or if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. I was assured that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was extremely healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that wet clothing must be changed (they may have no second suit to put on), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

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Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred.

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

137 in the case of the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there
824 are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi
757 of the nyaka, another species found in Morakwen in the black
815 earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a pretty little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles!

137 I find the same correct connection established between two
824 Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and
815 the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, of the same genus, but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always, scientifically speaking, correct. They call any parasite *Phakama*, whatever may be its form, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : "Phakama dja singita!" (1)

137 *Nkushe* means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulvus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter ; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family ; these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name is given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many forms of evergreen undergrowth.

777 (1) "The parasite stem *singita*," i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is
824 taboo, though some rules apply to it similar to those concerning the tree struck by
753 lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire ; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear lest men should suffer from hydrocele.

136 birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The
815 reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 445.)

136 *Coleoptera.* The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*,
825 and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes
777 Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha paripari* (p. 68) and to the large black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring ; one of them, marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small-pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : "To-day I shall eat to my heart's content!" — "Namunhla ndji ta shura!" — "What are you doing?" I said. — "Oh! This is the *Shurwa-shurwane*," he answered. "When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat!" He was mistaken! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which has also four white spots on its back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla ; is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla? (1)

136 — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange
[753] dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce
825 them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ,
262 with their long horns, are the *Nwahamurikotjo*, the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a truer etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 68). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, the

(1) This custom reminds one of the action of Swiss children when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or of their saying that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will cause rain to fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant!

769 with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, not-
776 withstanding the Sutho term badimo, which is believed by some to mean those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

769 The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the
776 sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal
825 themselves to their descendants by other and more common
753 means; first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such as the Mantis (p. 335) or more often as little bluish green snakes called *shihundje* (p. 340). These charming and harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, crawling in the thatch of the roof, or along the reeds of the walls (1). Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large grey puff-adder (shiphyahla) (2).

769 Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living
776 *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives,
787 he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order

769 (1) This is the story which I heard from one of my informants of the Khosa
825 country: All his family was once assembled together for a marriage feast. The people were playing on the village square and enjoying themselves. The old women had remained in the hut, and suddenly they saw two little green snakes crawling along the reeds of the wall. They were much afraid, and at once called the headman. He came in, saw the snakes, and said: "Do not fear! These are our ancestor-gods! They have come to share in our feast."

(2) Describing to me a sacrifice at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me as a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word:

"I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-adlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying: 'Thank you! Thank you! So you are still there, my children! You came to load me with presents, and to

787 see, why divination plays such an important part in their life.
769 It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think
776 and do, as the very existence of the village, and of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Lukwembo, Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives believe firmly in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything : earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have full control over all these objects or persons.

769 The gods can *bless* : if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because
776 they have made it grow (I. p. 414) ; if the crops are plentiful, it is because they forced wizards to increase them, or hindered them
777 from spoiling them (I. p. 396) ; if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 44). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home : "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele.) Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or spraining his ankle on a stump which has caught his foot, he will say : "The gods have saved me."

769 But they can also *curse*, and bring untold misfortune on their
776 descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger ; if a tree
789 falls on you, they have directed its fall ; if a crocodile bites you, the
753 gods have sent it ; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are in him, tormenting his soul ; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing ; perhaps the gods of your mother have done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjhumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 267) ; in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune : the baloyi, for instance, or Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief ; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by prayers and sacrifices.

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die); people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you: "Where are you going?" Then answer: "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred and no death there), where the mosquito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!" 772

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *Hosi*, Lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thongas appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea spring certain very characteristic customs, which I shall proceed to describe briefly.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been really ill, in a manner of speaking... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo," said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease), (I. p. 48), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo. [753]

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and makes live.* Hence the frequent expression: "Heaven loved him," when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him," when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge. 772 . 539

Wa hi kanganyisa, Tshabane!
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini!
Hi kumi bubanuna babiri, ba famba ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela pea bambe, u ta yingela ni pea ku!

757 *dlambangi*, *Likalahumba*, *Nkonono* (Terminalia sericea) and *Nsala*
278 (Strychnos spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is *Menyomamba*, *Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa, Albizzia versicolor) *Shongwe*, *Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very
[753] powerful drug ; the last but one less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used : *Lihlehlwa*, *Ntshatshe*, *Nkonono*, *Mamuntana*.

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shitsimbo. 3. Skin of a mole, containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill (Mhula). 5. Bracelet of *tjukunyane*. 6. *Timfisa*, amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

The Natives regard this complaint as contagious, and as being transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors. The first is *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on the sand dunes. The sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves ; these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to

on live embers, a pot containing leaves which are supposed to possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly. The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable condition! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remain in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga Turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The phungulo is administered in most cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume, Mpoñwana, Ritiyi* ; he cooks this in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; and into the fire, under the pot, he puts part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, in particular the uterus. This flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, by means either of the vapour, or of the smoke, the medicine enters the patients. "Ba wupfa," — "they ripen" or "are cooked." When the mat is removed, a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungulo which has "cooked them." They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put into the pot in which they keep their beer. 757 [753] [842]

A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots, which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule,

occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; 756
but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the 753
conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the *names* given to the diseases, the *causes* to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *rites which mark the end of a disease.*

1) As regards the method of *naming diseases*, it is most childish. 753
Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name 827
of the organ affected ; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms ; for instance when

753 827 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma), we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases ; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele *(masangu*, or *masenge)* is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjandjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway ; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyoka-na*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards" ?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize ; wutleka, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying : "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick ; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution. 753 827

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease : the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated. 753 787

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). *Consumption* is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in 753 164 751

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to
768 do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village. 758

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic. 753 828

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen. 753 834

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with paanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation. 753 783 184 755

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 184 755 783 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease*. Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "makhumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

000 a medical course be open to educated Natives, if not a complete University course, at least such instruction as would allow them to treat their fellow men in a scientific manner, the medicine-men being gradually prevented from practising their very questionable art.

B. POSSESSION.

753 The curious psychic phenomenon which I am now about to describe belongs to the domain of medecine ; it is "the disease," or rather the "madness of the gods" (bubabyi bya psikwembu). But at the same time it bears a distinctly religious character, the spirits which are believed to cause the disease being *psikwembu*, spirits of deceased people, to whom worship will be addressed. On the other hand, the rites connected with the treatment of this kind of madness are definitely magical, and those who have suffered from it often become recognised magicians, claiming to possess supernatural powers.

This is a very interesting subject from the point of view of psychology and psychiatry. Phenomena of possession exist amongst most uncivilised races, even amongst more advanced peoples, and it would be useful to compare the manifestations of this disease amongst Bantus with those met with in other parts of the world. I shall however leave this task to professionals, and only try faithfully and clearly to describe and, if possible, to understand, the facts which I witnessed myself. This disease has spread enormously amongst the Thongas in the last fifty years. It is said to have been previously very rare, or even unknown ; since that time it has become quite an epidemic, although it is at the present moment rather on the decrease. Possession is more frequent amongst the Ba-Ronga than in the Northern clans.

1. *The Spirits which Cause the Disease.*

753 776 Strange to say, the gods or spirits which are credited with the power of possessing people, are not the ancestors of the Thongas themselves, the ancestor-gods, but Zulu spirits and those

753 776 of the Ba-Ndjao tribe, who inhabit the country beyond the Sabie, as far as the neighbourhood of Beira. It appears that the possessions which first occurred were due to the Zulu and Ngoni spirits ; possibly they coincided with the invasion of the warriors of Manukosi, and with the ever-increasing exodus of young men who go to work in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the gold mines at Johannesburg, or Natal, and travel through territory occupied by Zulus. As regards the Ba-Ndjao spirits they are sometimes called *amandiki*, and are said to have followed the Thonga and Ngoni soldiers of Gungunyana, who established themselves for some years at Mosapa, right in the middle of the Ndjao country, to the North of the Sabie, and who, later on, came down again from that mountainous region into the fertile plain of Bilene. (Lower Limpopo.) On the other hand, when the war of 1894 to 1895 compelled the Northern Ba-Ronga, those from Mabota, Zihlahla and Nondwane to flee, they took with them, so the story goes, the gods who had possessed them, and "scattered" them so thoroughly in the countries of the North that, when they returned to their own homes, they were no longer molested by these *psikwembu*. That is what I was told by a Native. We must carefully note, at the outset, these two ideas : the tormenting spirits are the *manes of strangers* and not of the people of the country, and they frequently attack Thongas who happen to be travelling in such countries, and follow them in their further migrations (1).

The Ndjao possessions appear to be worse than the Zulu. "Bundjao bya karata" — "the Ndjao possession is painful." If the incantations used are in Zulu for Zulu possessions, they are in the Ndjao language when such are caused by Ndjao spirits, and those who suffer from this affliction are known by the large white beads which they wear in their hair. Sometimes they have merely a short string of small beads, hanging down somewhere from the head. I well remember on the banks of a stream, in a

(1) However, in the case of Mholombo, the spirit was an old Tembe chief, a true ancestor, and in that of Nwashihwana there was a throng of occupants, amongst them her own son, Manuel, who had died some time before. In the case of Mboza it was also a Ronga, but he had died in a foreign country (See later).

wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during one of our journeyings, seeing a good-looking young woman wearing one of these curious ornaments. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated. — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao," was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession amongst the Ba-Ronga (See *Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie*. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them began by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but this does not seem to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with the cold water restored her to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had *psikwembu*. Another, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream ; it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. Soon afterwards, however, he became lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms ; he lost his appetite and almost entirely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : "One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu suddenly started in me" (ndji sunguleka hi psikwembu psikañwe). I came back home, trembling in all my limbs. I entered the hut, but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends, who seized me, and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When I became conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown (I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs :

158 "Ha!" they said, "he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni
753 psikwembu)." Thus the first signs of possession seem to be a
756 nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, unusual yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. These symptoms, however, are not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted in order to arrive at a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called "his shade") are placed on the mat, and the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to ascertain to what doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not true *ñanga*, but are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga, who suffer from possession more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, differ slightly ; the schools of Kkongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashinhwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa ; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possession, or Exorcism.*

755 In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits." Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites : the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut in two so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred ; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must

thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover 766
a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis 756
(I. p. 141), with the same intention, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance. The most skilful of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning is ended, he will "raise the drugs," burning them as is done at the annual feast, and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possession.

Cases of possession, such as those which occur amongst the Thongas, 158
are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the 753
Rev. H. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba, amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. On hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu."

These psychological phenomena are certainly of a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear in an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that similar epidemics have broken out in populations which have been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. May not the progress of Alcoholism, together with the disintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last fifty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will here add two observations:

1) In the Jewish conception, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, which tormented poor humanity, and were cured by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantus have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are

158 transported into the realm of divinity, thus giving rise to the true gods
753 and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives an explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself in the presence of a double psychological consciousness is well-known ; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine players unconsciously exert on their victims, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well calculated to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. It would however be going too far to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in
[797] those phenomena. There is one very striking fact which is a source of great wonder to the Natives. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who recount, with glowing eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever success they may have obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease, and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possession.

C. WITCHCRAFT.

789 I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of
754 the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. The French word *sorcier* and the English term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, lead to the same misconception. In order to avoid errors it is, I think, imperative first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. The adjectives black and white are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thongas certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi* ; it consists of the

784 vertige intellectuel). Prof. Raoul Allier, in his valuable book on
152 *La Psychologie de la Conversion chez les peuples non civilisés* (Vol. I. p. 250-260), ably describes the psychological process which takes place in the soul of the savage. Suppose some event to have happened which has caused a deep emotion in the tribe, the arrival for instance of the first Europeans with a number of unknown objects which arouse fear in the Native population. This emotion may perhaps subside and eventually be forgotten, and the tribe will accustom itself to the presence of the new comers ; but if some great misfortune supervenes, for instance if a serious epidemic breaks out, a new emotion will be produced throughout the country. This will remind the people of the emotion previously experienced on the arrival of the Europeans, and, in the disturbed state of mind thus created, the association established between the two emotions will be extended to the two facts which gave birth to these emotions, and the tribe will declare that the first fact is the cause of the second. Europeans and everything they brought with them will henceforth be considered as taboo. This is utterly illogical and the conclusion absurd. Yet this is what actually happens amongst people whose reasoning faculties are but little developed. These observations help us greatly in our understanding of primitive mentality, and many taboos may be psychologically explained in this way. Most of them, however, are inexplicable. They originate in the animistic or dynamistic collective representations of the tribe (p. 368) and these representations are instinctive, unconscious and consequently unaccountable.

784 2) How are they *enforced*? In as far as taboos have been
626 proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet
753 with punishment by those agents. A chief will sue a subject using a hlonipha word. The gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 426). But, in most cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.